

The Department of Defense Announced Awards Totaling \$2 Million for Minerva's Defense Education Civilian University Research (DECUR) Partnership

The Department of Defense (DoD) announced the selection of faculty teams for awards through Minerva's FY2019 Defense Education and Civilian University Research (DECUR) Partnership, supporting fundamental research and professional military education.

This partnership aims to develop collaborative basic research relationships between Defense Professional Military Education (PME) Institutions and Civilian Research Universities and achieve the following: 1) support basic research projects that improve capacities in security-related basic social science; 2) inform Department of Defense policymakers; 3) train future military leaders in social science methods; and 4) enhance scientific cooperation between civilian and military educational institutions.

The Minerva Research Initiative, funded by the Basic Research Office, under the Director of Defense for Research and Engineering, Research and Technology, supports basic research that focuses on topics of particular relevance to U.S. national security. Through its network of faculty investigators, Minerva strengthens the department's connections with the social science community and helps DoD better understand and prepare for future challenges, particularly those prioritized in the National Defense Strategy.

"The DECUR Partnership will not only facilitate leading social science researchers in addressing NDS-relevant problems but through this partnership future military leaders will gain experience in using social science to think through the social context of security problems," said Dr. Bindu Nair, Director of the Basic Research Office. "The knowledge and methodologies generated from Minerva awardees are an important source of new ideas from the social science community to understand better the social aspects that underlie security and stability."

The following five faculty teams were selected for the following projects:

- 1. Russia and China as Service Providers for Illiberal Governance**
 - a. Co-PI: **Marlene Laruelle** (George Washington University)
 - b. Co-PI: **Erica Marat** (National Defense University)
 - Topic Area (OUSD): Peer/Near-peer Statecraft, Influence, and Regional Balance of Power
 - Topic Area (ONR): Power, Deterrence, and Escalation Management
- 2. Foreign Military Training: Building Effective Armed Forces in Weak States**
 - a. Co-PI: **Will Reno (Northwestern University)**
 - b. Co-PI: **Ryan Burke** (United States Air Force Academy)
 - Topic Area (OUSD): Alliances and Burden Sharing
- 3. Economic Interdependence and National Security in the 21st Century**
 - a. Co-PI: **Erik Gartzke** (University of California, San Diego)
 - b. Co-PI: **David Sacko** (United States Air Force Academy)
 - Topic Area (OUSD): Economic Interdependence and Security
- 4. The Topology of Interdependent Multi-Domain Behavioral Systems**
 - a. Co-PI: **Nina Fefferman** (University of Tennessee)
 - b. Co-PI: **Nakeya Williams** (United States Merchant Marine Academy)

- Topic Area (AFOSR): Multi-Domain Behavioral Complexity and Computational Social Modeling

5. Understanding Chinese Influence Operations through the Lens of Social Movement Theory

- a. Co-PI: **Tanushree Mitra** (Virginia Tech)
- b. Co-PI: **Gwyneth Sutherland** (National Defense University)
 - Topic Area (ONR): Models and Methods for Understanding Covert Online Influence

The Minerva Research Initiative is jointly administered by the Basic Research Office in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering and the Strategy and Force Development Office in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. The projects are supported by the Basic Research Office and administered jointly with the Air Force Office of Scientific Research and the Office of Naval Research.

The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering (OUSD(R&E)) is responsible for the research, development, and prototyping activities across the Department of Defense. OUSD(R&E) fosters technological dominance across the DoD, ensuring the unquestioned superiority of the American joint force. Learn more at www.cto.mil/ or follow us on Twitter: @DoDCTO.

For more information on the Minerva Research Initiative, [click here](#).

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